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EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:
1—Official Business
2—Necessarily Absent
3—Illness
4—Other

somehow "cheating" on how much we have proposed to spend. We are offended by this suggestion, and will take careful note of those Senators who vote for this amendment. We have caps for discretionary spending, but we specifically and correctly allow emergency spending in excess of those caps. How can it be called "cheating" to exercise that authority?

That point aside, the basic premise of this amendment is that when emergency spending is necessary, the outlay costs of responding to that need should only be outside of the spending caps in the year that the need occurs. For instance, if an earthquake were to cause tens of billions of dollars in damage in California this summer, any relief given before October 1 could be emergency spending, but all budget authority used after October 1 would have to be spent under the budget caps, meaning that other spending would have to be reduced commensurately.

On this bill, most of the emergency spending is for unanticipated costs in the Middle East (in response to Saddam Hussein's interference with weapons inspections) and in Bosnia (when we passed the Defense Appropriations bill last year, we expected the Bosnia deployment to end this summer, but President Clinton has decided it is necessary to continue that expensive deployment indefinitely). Both of those emergency, unexpected costs happened this year, but their costs will stretch over several years. For instance, it will cost \$250 million next year to redeploy those forces that had to be rushed to the Middle East. Our dwindling military forces are at their highest operating tempo since World War II. We cannot cut back further on personnel costs, nor can we cut operating costs. If we were to put this unexpected defense spending under next year's budget caps, large cuts therefore would have to be made in procurement. When we are talking about spending, we are talking about outlays, not budget authority. Budget authority for military procurement items is typically spent over several years. For instance, if \$1 billion in budget authority were provided for jet fighters in a year, it is likely that only a quarter or less of that money would actually be spent in that year. Therefore, just to cover the \$250 million personnel cost mentioned above, this amendment could very well require a reduction in military procurement budget authority of \$1 billion next year. Of course, the logical alternative for the Defense Department would be to try to spend as much money as possible before the end of the fiscal year, in order to avoid cuts. The result would be much of that hastily spent money would be spent unwisely.

Though we emphatically oppose this amendment, we agree that its sponsors have a valid concern. To an extent, Congress knows each year that it is going to have some emergencies to which it will have to respond, and it should logically set money aside at the beginning of the year to address such emergencies. Also, our colleagues are correct that the definition of the appropriate Federal role in responding to emergencies has expanded greatly in recent years. We will work with our colleagues in devising criteria to follow in deciding what constitutes an emergency that merits a Federal response, and we will work with our colleagues in coming up with planning ahead of time for emergencies, but we will not agree to this proposal. Our colleagues have identified a problem, but their solution would be damaging, especially to our defense capabilities, and should therefore be opposed.

Those opposing the motion to table contended:

In his latest State of the Union address, President Clinton recently promised that any budget surpluses that occur over the next several years will be used to "save Social Security first." Members from both sides of the aisle gave a standing ovation in support of that promise. After having been around this particular President for the past 5 years, many of us did not have the slightest expectation that he actually had any intention of keeping it. He got his applause, but he of course has not made any legislative proposals to strengthen Social Security, and he has of course submitted a budget proposal that calls for new taxes and even more new spending on proposals unrelated to Social Security. When we applauded, we were not applauding the President, we were applauding the proposal. Congress should make the President keep his promise by refusing to allow total spending to grow beyond the amounts that have already been agreed to in the balanced budget agreement.

The Gramm/Santorum amendment would further that end by stopping the President, and Congress, from using emergency spending as a budget gimmick to increase spending in excess of the spending caps. Under President Clinton, emergency spending each year has averaged more than \$7 billion. President Clinton has proven very adept at promising aid for purposes and in amounts well in excess of what historically has been provided. Those spending bills have often been larded up with spending items that not only have not been emergency needs, they have been so wasteful that they have already been rejected in the regular appropriations process. The great gimmick of this emergency spending is that it is not counted under the budget caps. Therefore, Members and the President are able to claim that they have limited spending when they pass the regular appropriations bills, and then later in the year they are able to pass deficit-spending bills full of special-interest spending that wins the votes back home, and not one cent of that deficit-spending is counted against the spending limits. Since Republicans took over Congress, they have tried, and largely succeeded, in demanding offsets for emergency supplemental spending. This bill, though, does not even make the attempt.

What really needs to be done is to budget ahead of time for natural disasters and other unexpected, unavoidable expenses. Also, the Federal role needs to be clearly defined, and Congress should not consider or pass proposals that exceed the definition. In this instance, most of the spending is related to Bosnia. No one expected this President to follow Congress' clear desire to get American forces out of that country. When we passed the defense appropriations bill last year, we would have given almost any odds that we would be considering a supplemental to pay for Bosnia operations and other operations later in the year.

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We are not opposing giving this money--it must be given. Neither are we in any way defending the inadequate defense bill that we passed--that bill should have been larger to include the funds that we knew would be required for operations, and it should have been larger for a wide variety of other reasons as well, including to increase procurement, provide better wages and living conditions, increase training, and add personnel to reduce operating tempos. The reality, though, is that we made a deal on how much we would spend over the next several years, including on defense, and we should honor that deal. Republicans took over Congress and balanced the budget, but that is only the first step. The harder part is going to be dealing with the debt and keeping the country solvent when Social Security starts paying out hundreds of billions of dollars more each year than it collects in taxes.

We do not oppose real emergency spending. If a sudden need arises, if funding has not been set aside for such a sudden need ahead of time, and there is not time to identify offsets, we should give the aid immediately and worry about how to pay for it later. Further, we agree that for budgetary reasons it does not make sense to try to pay for a sudden expense at the end of a fiscal year out of an agency's remaining budget authority. If for instance, an agency has \$100 million in budget authority remaining, and \$100 million needs to be allocated to give emergency aid that is under its jurisdiction, it does not make sense to say that every cent of that agency's remaining budget authority needs to be transferred, leaving nothing for pay, administration, or other programs. The same logic does not apply, however, when responding to an emergency months or years after the fact. There is no longer an "emergency." Certainly there are remaining costs that can last for some time, but those costs can and should be included in the budget.

It is obviously too late to budget for this emergency spending bill ahead of time for this year, but it is not too late to enact a fix that would have the same effect for future years as though we had set up an emergency fund. Roughly one-third of the Federal Budget, or \$550 billion, is discretionary spending that is under the spending caps. About \$250 billion of that amount is defense spending. Thus, if less than 1 percent of last year's appropriation bill had been put into an emergency fund we would not even need to be considering this bill.

The Gramm/Santorum amendment would effectively create that emergency fund 1 year late. Outlays for this year would not be covered, because if they were it would cause great disruptions with defense operations, as explained above. However, outlays over the next few years can and should be worked into the budget. Doing so would make us live up to our commitment in the budget agreement not to increase spending. Instead of using the expected budget surpluses over the next several years to increase spending, we should use them to save Social Security first. We therefore strongly support this amendment.